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TOR: 300135037

BFN: JN051588

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SERIAL: JN051588

SUBJ: JERUSALEM ARABIC TV

REF: WA280588 ADM

TEXT:

MANNERS/BAKER, GRAHAM FROM KNOX

SANDRA AND I DISCUSSED THE ISSUE OF JERUSALEM ARABIC TV IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE BCC AND REACHED AN UNDERSTANDING THAT JN WOULD TAKE STEPS TOWARD COVERING THIS SOURCE.

JN'S UNDERSTANDING UNTIL THE BCC WAS THAT TA COVERED JERUSALEM ARABIC TV AS PUBLISHED IN THE FIELD COVERAGE SCHEDULE. IN FACT FIRST SUGGESTION HEARD HERE THAT JN MIGHT TAKE OVER THIS SERVICE CAME FROM AG'S MORTON AFTER HIS MAY VISIT TO TA, WHERE THE MATTER APPARENTLY CAME UP FOR DISCUSSION. I BROUGHT UP THE ISSUE AT THE CONFERENCE BECAUSE OF MY CONVICTION THAT WE WERE NOT GETTING ADEQUATE PRODUCTION OUT OF JERUSALEM RADIO ARABIC (IT'S OUR ONE BRIEF GLIMPSE OF ISRAELI MEDIA) AND THOUGHT THAT THE ADDITION OF THE TV SERVICE WOULD PERMIT US ALL AT THIS BUREAU TO CONCENTRATE BETTER ON THE PROBLEM OF SELECTION FROM THIS VERY INTERESTING SOURCE. LOCAL CONSUMERS HERE ARE HIGHLY ATTENTIVE TO JERUSALEM RADIO AND TV ARABIC SERVICES. THEY ALSO ASSERT THAT THE STYLES ARE VERY DIFFERENT, WITH THE TV CARRYING MORE DISTINCTIVE MESSAGES TO ARAB LISTENERS WITHIN ISRAELI BORDERS AND IN JORDAN. HENCE, MY FIRST GOAL WAS SIMPLY TO CONSOLIDATE COVERAGE OF THESE ARABIC SERVICES AT ONE BUREAU OR THE OTHER.

THEN I LEARNED THAT THE COVERAGE SCHEDULE WAS NOT PRECISE ABOUT HOW COVERAGE WAS MAINTAINED, SINCE TA COVERED TV ARABIC VIA HEBREW SUBTITLES AND THOSE PORTIONS ORIGINALLY RECORDED IN HEBREW. MY FEELING IS THAT COVERING SUBTITLES WEAKENS OUR CONFIDENCE THAT WE ARE FULLY EXPLOITING THE SOURCE. I DON'T BELIEVE WE CAN PROVIDE CONSUMERS WITH ADEQUATE COVERAGE OF A SOURCE IN A PARTICULAR LANGUAGE WITH MONITORS WHO HAVE NO CAPABILITY IN THAT LANGUAGE.

ADMITTEDLY, JERUSALEM ARABIC TV PRESENTS A UNIQUE COVERAGE PROBLEM BECAUSE OF ITS BILINGUAL NATURE -- ARABIC NARRATION WITH HEBREW SUBTITLES AND SOMETIME HEBREW RECORDINGS WITH ARABIC SUBTITLES. IDEALLY, IT SHOULD BE

cc: c/mod

COVERED BY MONITORS CAPABLE IN BOTH LANGUAGES.
UNFORTUNATELY, THE IDEAL SOLUTION IS IMPRACTICABLE AS TA'S
ARABIC CAPABILITY IS DEVOTED TO WEST BANK PAPERS WITH NO
TIME LEFT OVER FOR TV.

I BELIEVE BOTH JERUSALEM ARABIC SERVICES -- RADIO AND TV
-- SHOULD BE CONSOLIDATED AT JN TO ENHANCE SELECTION. REF
RAISES QUESTION OF "UNIQUE ARABIC-LANGUAGE INFORMATION
THAT SHOULD BE PROCESSED AND THAT TA IS UNABLE TO HANDLE."
THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SOURCE RESTS IN THE VIEW THAT ISRAEL
IS TRYING TO PRESENT TO ITS ARAB CITIZENS AND NEIGHBORING
ARAB COUNTRIES, AND THIS VIEW IS CLEARER THROUGH THE
ARABIC SIDE OF THE CASTS. SINCE JN'S MONITORS ARE IN THE
TARGET AUDIENCE, THEY SHOULD HAVE A BETTER FEEL FOR SUBTLE
MESSAGES, PARTICULARLY AS THEY CAN PICK UP ON LINGUISTIC
CUES FROM THE NARRATION OR ARABIC SUBTITLES. SINCE TA'S
PROCESSING DOES NOT INVOLVE ANY ACTUAL ARABIC TRANSLATION,
ANYTHING NOT AIMED AT A HEBREW-LITERATE AUDIENCE IS LOST.
FINALLY, I EXPECT PRODUCTIVITY OF JERUSALEM ARABIC SERVICES
TO RISE IF RADIO AND TV ARE CONSOLIDATED AT ONE BUREAU,
WHICH CAN CONCENTRATE ON THIS ASPECT OF ISRAELI MEDIA.

WE MAY WELL HAVE TO COORDINATE ON COVERAGE OF HEBREW-
LANGUAGE MATERIAL. WE DO NOT EXPECT THIS TO BE A MAJOR
PROBLEM AS WE GET DROP COPIES OF VIRTUALLY THE ENTIRE TA
TAKE. OUR PROCESSING OF HEBREW-LANGUAGE MATERIAL WILL, OF
COURSE, DEPEND ON ARABIC SUBTITLES. THIS MAY BE ADEQUATE
FOR ITEMS NOT COVERED FROM TA'S HEBREW-LANGUAGE COVERAGE OR
AIMED AT AN ARAB AUDIENCE. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT IS
POSSIBLE THAT THE ARABIC SUBTITLES WILL PROVE INTERESTING
IN COMPARISON TO SIMILAR HEBREW-LANGUAGE ITEMS PROCESSED BY
TA.

APPRECIATE TA'S CURRENT VIEWS ON COVERAGE CHANGE.

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